



MassDEPNEWS

Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection

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Patrick-Murray Administration Announces that School Bus Retrofit Program Installs Pollution Controls on another 55 School Buses in Six Communities

Diesel Retrofits Clean the Air from Vehicles that Serve More Than 13,000 Students

BOSTON – Two towns, two school districts and one transportation company have all joined the growing list of school bus owners that have participated in “MASSCLEANDIESEL: Clean Air for Kids,” a program that encourages the Commonwealth’s bus owners to install free pollution controls on eligible diesel school buses.

With \$16.5 million in state and federal funding provided by the Massachusetts Department of Transportation (MassDOT), under an agreement associated with the Central Artery/Tunnel Project, MASSCLEANDIESEL: Clean Air for Kids aims to install pollution controls – known as diesel retrofits – on thousands of diesel-powered school buses across the Commonwealth.

Leominster Public Schools, Southwick Tolland Regional School District, Coppola Transportation based in Haverhill, and the towns of Granville and Carver are the latest to join the statewide effort.

“These investments will bring cleaner air to communities across the Commonwealth and serve as an example of how small changes can make a big difference to our environment,” said Governor Deval Patrick.

“MASSCLEANDIESEL is the nation’s first fully-funded, statewide program to reduce air pollution from school buses,” Secretary of Energy and Environmental Affairs Ian Bowles said.

“Thousands of children ride buses to school each day, and this program will make sure that diesel emissions don’t ride along with them and compromise their health.”

“We are committed to building a transportation system that strengthens communities and supports a clean and healthy environment,” MassDOT Secretary & CEO Jeffrey Mullan said.

“The MASSCLEANDIESEL program is a great example of partnerships between federal, state and local officials working together to improve lives for our residents,” Education Secretary Paul Reville said. “Our goal is to provide an excellent and equitable education for all of our students and that starts with helping them arrive at school healthy and prepared to learn. I am pleased to see the strong participation of schools in these efforts to improve air quality.”

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Collectively, the towns of Granville and Carver, Leominster Public Schools, Southwick Tolland Regional School District and Coppola Transportation have installed retrofits on 55 diesel school buses that service more than 13,000 students in their districts.

“Each retrofit will reduce pollution from the exhaust and result in cleaner, healthier air for everyone,” MassDEP Commissioner Laurie Burt said. “This is especially important for children whose developing lungs are particularly susceptible to diesel exhaust’s damaging health effects.”

The Town of Granville installed retrofits on two of its buses, which service approximately 180 students from kindergarten through 12th grade across Granville Village.

“The MASSCLEANDIESEL program was well-planned and flawlessly managed. I have never seen a state program operate as smoothly and we could not be more pleased to have participated,” said Doug Roberts, Superintendent of Granville’s Department of Public Works.

Leominster Public Schools installed retrofits on two of its buses responsible for transporting approximately 300 students to and from Leominster’s six public schools to various sporting events and field trips.

“It is an excellent program and we are really glad we could participate. The state did a great job putting it all together,” said Peter Progin, Transportation Coordinator for Leominster Public Schools.

“I am once again pleased that the Patrick Administration is reaching out to North Central Massachusetts,” said state Sen. Jennifer Flanagan. “This program has been very successful in other communities in my District and I am thrilled that Leominster will benefit from this. We have an imperative responsibility to our environment, so even smaller changes like this will prove to be worthwhile.”

Southwick Tolland Regional School District installed retrofits on 13 school buses serving approximately 1,800 students in the region’s three public schools.

“The process was run very well and the follow through was efficient and well thought out. Once we committed to the program, it was a fluid transition and a great program,” said Paul Petit, Assistant Superintendent of Schools, Southwick Tolland Regional School District.

Coppola Transportation, a privately owned bus company servicing the City of Haverhill, installed retrofits on 20 of its school buses. Coppola is responsible for transporting approximately 9,000 students from kindergarten through 12th grade to and from Haverhill’s many public schools and to field trips and sporting events.

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“The whole program went very smoothly,” said Barry Simmons, Service Manager for Coppola Transportation, “and we are very glad to have participated.”

“As the Senate Chairman of the Joint Committee on Transportation and the father of two school-bus riding daughters, I am acutely aware of the environmental and health hazards that school bus emissions can cause,” said state Sen. Steven A. Baddour. “Promoting more efficient, environmentally-friendly vehicles through retro-fitting these buses to run on clean diesel is a critical link the chain of decreasing emissions, reducing our reliance on petroleum, and fostering this segment of our business sector.”

“I appreciate that Governor Patrick and his administration chose to include the City of Haverhill in the MassCleanDiesel program,” said state Rep. Brian S. Dempsey. “I commend Coppola Transportation for participating in this program as well. The bus retrofits are an important step in the ongoing effort to improve the health of our school children.”

“This program is an example of Massachusetts’ commitment to reduce emissions, as well as, provide a healthy environment for our children to grow and learn,” said state Rep. Barbara L’Italien.

“I’m happy for Coppola – because cleaner air benefits ‘kids’ of all ages... and their pets, too,” said state Rep. Harriett Stanley.

The Town of Carver installed retrofits on 15 buses in its fleet that services more than 1,800 students attending Carver’s public schools.

Maureen Dickson, director of Transportation for the Town of Carver Public Schools, thinks “the program is great for the environment and good for the students as well. The state did a great job putting it together and it ran very smoothly.”

“I am pleased to see that MassDEP has expanded the successful MassCleanDiesel program in the town of Carver,” said state Sen. Marc R. Pacheco, chair of the Senate Committee on Global Warming and Climate Change. “This program will help the state to reduce harmful greenhouse gas emissions, while improving air quality and protecting public health significantly.”

By participating in the program, each entity received a diesel oxidation catalyst (DOC), a crankcase ventilation (CCV) filter system, or both. DOCs, which function like catalytic converters in the engine exhaust system, reduce tailpipe emissions. CCVs, which are installed on the engine, greatly reduce the infiltration of blow-by gases from the engine into a bus’s interior.

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Installed together, the DOC and CCV reduce emissions of fine particulate matter (particulate matter or PM that is 2.5 micrometers in diameter or less) by at least 20 percent or more, hydrocarbons (HC) by 60 percent, and carbon monoxide (CO) by 60 percent. There is strong scientific evidence that PM is implicated in the rising asthma rates in school age children and is also considered a probable carcinogen. HC helps form ground-level smog, and exposure to this pollutant is associated with increased hospital admissions for respiratory distress, such as bronchitis. Exposure to CO can cause headaches, nausea, and death.

Southworth-Milton, Inc., conducting business as Milton CAT in Milford, installed retrofit devices for the Town of Granville, Leominster Public Schools and Coppola Transportation. New England Transit Sales, Inc. of Tyngsboro installed retrofit devices for Southwick Tolland Regional School District, and Shuster Corporation of New Bedford installed retrofit devices for the Town of Carver.

For more information, visit www.mass.gov/dep/air/masscleandiesel, email program officials at massclean.diesel@state.ma.us, or call the MASSCLEANDIESEL Help Line at 617-292-5809.

MassDEP is responsible for ensuring clean air and water, safe management and recycling of solid and hazardous wastes, timely cleanup of hazardous waste sites and spills, and the preservation of wetlands and coastal resources.

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